

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No. 10/533,425

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A connection element as part of a rapid connection unit for connection lines, comprising a tubular base body on which at least two two-armed snap elements are formed that are diametrically opposite one another, laterally spaced and each connected at a respective rocking point by an elastic connection piece to an outer wall of the base body and each comprise an inwardly directed ~~hooks~~ hook capable of engaging a catch element on an outer wall of a counterpiece of the rapid connection unit wherein the snap elements ~~(5)~~ comprise spring arms ~~(13)~~ whose free ends are bent back and inward in such a manner that a gap ~~(a)~~ is present between these free ends and an opposite opposed contact surfaces of the spring arms ~~surface~~ in an engaged position, said ~~opposite opposed~~ opposed contact ~~surface~~ surfaces limiting rocking movement of said snap elements such that inwardly directing hooks disengage said catch elements

2. (Currently Amended) The connection element according to claim 1, wherein the spring arms ~~(13)~~ comprise at least two bent portions, a first of said at least two bent portions being bent slightly concavely outward and a second of said at least two bent

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portions being bent in a direction of the gap ~~base body (1)~~ and
~~the gap (a)~~.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The connection element according to
claim 1, wherein the second contact surfaces ~~(10)~~ are formed on
the base body ~~(1)~~ and run diametrically opposed to each other in
a direction of a central axis.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A connection element for connecting
a connection line to a counterpiece, comprising:

a base body;

a stop piece operably coupled to a first end of said base
body;

a stop plate operably coupled to a second end of said base
body;

a first connection piece operably coupled to said first end
of said base body, said first connection piece being capable of
receiving said connection line;

a second connection piece operably coupled to said second
end of said base body, said second connection piece being capable

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of being releasably coupled to said counterpiece; and at least two snap elements, each of said snap elements being capable of releasably securing said counterpiece to said connection element and comprising:

- a first snap element end comprising a spring arm;
- a second snap element end comprising a hook; and
- a connection piece arranged between said first and second snap element ends, said connection piece being operably coupled to base body;

wherein said snap element is biased such that said hook engages with a catch element of said counterpiece in an engaged position, and said spring arm interacts elastically with said stop piece to limit travel of said snap element in a release position.

7. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 6, wherein said counterpiece contacts said stop plate in said engaged position such that movement of said counterpiece is restricted in a first direction by said hooks and in a second direction by said stop plate.

8. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 6, wherein said second end of said base body comprises a sealing

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ring, said sealing ring being capable of sealing said
counterpiece to said base body in said engaged position.

9. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim
6, wherein said spring arm comprises a rounding, said rounding
being capable of interacting with said stop piece to limit travel
of said snap element in said release position.

10. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim
6, wherein said stop piece comprises a first contact surface,
said first contact surface contacting said spring arm in said
engaged position.

11. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim
10, wherein said stop piece further comprises a second contact
surface, said second contact surface contacting said spring arm
in said release position.

12. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim
11, wherein said first and second contact surfaces cooperate with
said spring arm to limit travel of said snap element in said
release position.

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13. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 12, wherein said second end of said base body comprises a sealing ring, said sealing ring being capable of sealing said counterpiece to said base body in said engaged position.

14. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 13, wherein said spring arm comprises a rounding, said rounding being capable of interacting with said stop piece to limit travel of said snap element in said release position.

15. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 6, wherein said connection piece permits a rocking motion of said snap element.

16. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 15, wherein said counterpiece contacts said stop plate in said engaged position such that movement of said counterpiece is restricted in a first direction by said hooks and in a second direction by said stop plate.

17. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 16, wherein said stop piece comprises a first contact surface, said first contact surface contacting said spring arm in said engaged position.

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18. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 17, wherein said stop piece further comprises a second contact surface, said second contact surface contacting said spring arm in said release position.

19. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 18, wherein said first and second contact surfaces cooperate with said spring arm to limit travel of said snap element rocking motion in said release position.

20. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 19, wherein said second end of said base body comprises a sealing ring, said sealing ring being capable of sealing said counterpiece to said base body in said engaged position.

21. (*Previously Presented*) The connection element of claim 20, wherein said spring arm comprises a rounding, said rounding being capable of interacting with said stop piece to limit travel of said snap element in said release position.

22. (*New*) A connection element for connecting a connection line to a counterpiece, comprising:
a base body;

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a stop piece operably coupled to a first end of said base body;

a stop plate operably coupled to a second end of said base body;

a first connection piece operably coupled to said first end of said base body, said first connection piece being capable of receiving said connection line;

a second connection piece operably coupled to said second end of said base body, said second connection piece being capable of being releasably coupled to said counterpiece; and at least two snap elements, each of said snap elements being capable of releasably securing said counterpiece to said connection element and comprising:

a first snap element end comprising a spring arm;

a second snap element end comprising a hook; and

a connection piece arranged between said first and second snap element ends, said connection piece being operably coupled to base body;

wherein said snap element is biased such that said hook engages with a catch element of said counterpiece in an engaged position, and said spring arm is bent inwardly to form an open, elastically deformable eyelet between the first snap element end and an inner surface of said spring arm, such that said spring arm imparts a return force to the respective snap element.